



**For immediate release
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GOVERNOR PATRICK DECLARES JUNE “GREAT OUTDOORS MONTH”

Governor Deval Patrick has declared the month of June to be “Great Outdoors Month,” joining a number of states across the country in urging the public to enjoy and protect their natural resources.

This is the second year that Gov. Patrick has issued this proclamation. With nearly 450,000 acres of state parklands – one of the largest state park systems of any state in the nation – Massachusetts has much to offer the outdoor enthusiast.

“From the Berkshire Mountains to the sandy dunes of Cape Cod, from the mighty Merrimack River to the beauty of the Emerald Necklace, Massachusetts has a proud legacy of parks, trails, and public lands throughout the Commonwealth,” the proclamation stated. The Governor urged residents to “protect, enhance, and utilize, responsibly and sustainably, the natural resources of the Commonwealth for present and future generations.”

Massachusetts is the first state in New England to establish June as Great Outdoors Month, and joins 24 states across the country whose governors have made such proclamations.

In his proclamation, Gov. Patrick recognized that outdoor activities such as biking, swimming, and hiking promote “fitness and a healthy lifestyle,” and noted that June represents the beginning of the summer recreation and vacation season.

“The governor recognizes well the importance of getting outdoors and enjoying nature and the contribution that makes to a healthy lifestyle,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Ian Bowles. “We are delighted with his proclamation, and urge all residents of the Commonwealth to step outside, visit a park or beach, and recognize what he calls our ‘shared responsibility’ to protect and enjoy our natural resources.”

Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., whose department oversees the state parks and beaches, also applauded the governor’s proclamation.

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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“June is indeed a great month to be outdoors,” Sullivan said. “Our beaches are opening, our parks are ready, and we at DCR are doing our very best to make this a wonderful recreation season.”

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, and dams, in addition to 278 bridges and miles of roadways. Led by Commissioner Richard K. Sullivan Jr., the agency’s mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.